

1568/2044.

L E T T E R S

B E T W E E N

Two Lovers and their Friends.

L E T T E R S

BETWEEN

T W O L O V E R S

AND

THEIR FRIENDS

BY THE

AUTHOR OF LETTERS

Supplied to the public by the
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It is now the first time
in the history of the
that a new edition
has been published
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DEDICATION.

TO THE

Right Honourable LADY MONSON.

MADAM,

TO call the attention of mankind to works written for the purpose of affording it an innocent and instructive amusement, it is sometimes necessary to give them the sanction of a name, under whose respectable patronage they may find an unsuspicious reception among those readers who wish to receive instruction in the form of a story, and mingled with pictures of nature and of life.

vi DEDICATION.

It is for this purpose, that, alike unknown to your Ladyship and to the world, I have taken the liberty of prefixing your name to these volumes; a name which must bring to the recollection of every-one who knows you, the virtues which I have endeavoured to describe in this little offspring of my leisure and retired hours.

In an age, Madam, when the motives to marriage are so much suspected, when its duties are so continually violated, and when so many married persons apply to the very powers which have united them, for an eternal dissolution, you are an eminent and amiable example of conjugal virtue; and, having approached the altar with those sentiments which can alone sanctify the nuptial union, you have completely realised them in the practice of every domestic duty.

Examples of virtuous beauty are become very rare in the higher orders of life; and I most sincerely wish that
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DEDICATION. vii

it had been my lot to have lived in times when your excellence would have been less conspicuous. It would have afforded me a most sincere satisfaction, if, on examining the catalogue of noble beauties, I had been at a loss what name to have preferred among the variety of exalted characters that might have solicited my choice: but, alas! this is not an age for such a pleasing distraction, and I had not a moment to hesitate in offering this address to you, and begging you to accept this trifling mark of that respect with which I am,

Your Ladyship's

most obedient,

humble servant,

THE AUTHOR.

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A. & J. E. T.

L E T T E R S, &c.

To Jonathan Cozens, Esq.

My dear Sir,

Hislip Parsonage.

THIS is the first letter I ever addressed to you; and I enter upon it with those feelings which would naturally accompany the writing my last.—It tells me, what I would willingly hide from myself, that you are to live with me no more. After having had you for twelve years under my roof, and, during that time, having found you what my heart could wish, I feel a sad chasm in my life at your departure from me. You have been my pride ever since you were entrusted to my care; your understanding and your heart are such as I could wish them to be, and if they should pass safe and unhurt through the fiery trial of the world, you will be one of the most conspicuous characters in it.—But a new scene now opens before you; the tranquility of my cottage will be, or, I should rather say, is already exchanged for

the bustling and engaging scenes of busy and elegant life. Temptations, which I never suffered to approach you, during your abode with me, will now continually surround you; and cloath themselves in their most seducing appearance, to turn you from the paths of virtue. I tremble for you!--and those very virtues, whose growth I have encouraged; those amiable dispositions, which I have helped to form, encrease my apprehensions.

It would have been almost impossible, at least as I thought, to infuse that suspicion which may, perhaps, be necessary in the commerce of life, into your mind, without, in some degree, contaminating the excellence of it. My hints therefore upon the depravity of mankind, were always cautiously given, and expressed in the most general terms. Your uncle was continually urging me to enter upon closer explanations of the subject; but I could never bring myself to fuly the fair temple of your bosom with the filthy doubts of the world. Let the world, said I, do its own dirty business; I will fortify him with those principles of virtue which shall protect him against the assault of the enemy; I will point out to him the refuge to which he may fly for protection in distress and danger, and leave the rest to heaven. Besides, it was my purpose to accompany you in some of the first stages on your entrance into the world

world. I had promised myself the pleasures of attending you, some months at least, after the business of scholastic education was passed; and I had brought the only person to consent who could have withheld me from it: but her sudden, unexpected, and what, I fear, will prove a lasting illness, has now put an end to any probability of my being able to accomplish this favourite design. Her love and tenderness deserve every return from me, who have, for twenty-five years, received such continued proofs of them; and nothing in this world could, or indeed ought to tempt me from beside her, at a period, when the little share of pleasure which she is capable of receiving, must proceed from me. We have travelled so long together, I cannot now think of leaving her for a moment, when her journey draws nigh to an end.

As for my flock, whom I have never yet forsaken, and over whom, without boasting, I may declare that I have watched with continual attention, they, I trust, by the blessing of God upon my labours, are able to go alone; and my absence from them, at least for the time I should be away, and considering the pious vigilance of my curate, to whose care I should leave them, could not be attended with any evil consequence; while the good which might be done to society, in conveying a young man of such great expectations as yourself,

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on his first entrance into the world, would be of the most extensive nature. But this design, by the will of heaven, being entirely obstructed, nothing remains for me but to give you, from time to time, such friendly admonitions, as may keep you upon your guard against the perils to which you must inevitably be exposed.

Your heart possesses the seeds of genuine excellence, generosity, kindness, fidelity; in short, every noble disposition that can grace the man or the christian, has made an home of it: and, alas! these are the gracious qualities which you will find numbers on the watch to turn to their own emolument and your dishonour. But I would not have you suppose that there is so detestable a malignity in mankind, as to aim at corruption merely from an enmity to virtue:—such a spirit, I trust, does not exist. Bad as the world is, I cannot believe that there are any in it who are the slaves of vice for the sake of vice: some base interest lurking in the heart, or the hopes of obtaining some good, which cannot be acquired without villainy and injustice, lead men into these depths of wickedness, wherein they who live much in the world, see so many involved. It is not that you are good, it is not that you are amiable, that so many snares will be laid to deceive you; but because you are the declared heir of

of one of the most wealthy men in the kingdom.

Of the many who will seek your friendship, there are some, who, sycophants by nature, wish for nothing else but the honour of your acquaintance, and to be thought connected with a young man of your rising consequence. Others, who are too mean to do or to dare anything great, even in villainy, will court your society, in order to avail themselves of your generosity. But these are characters which will scarce merit a moment's apprehension; as a very small degree of experience, accompanied with your good sense, will enable you to discover the gilded insects that buz about you, and to brush them off at pleasure. The real danger is in those societies into which all young men are introduced, in order to learn the manners and behaviour of the world; a science, in the attainment whereof, Virtue, Fortune, and Health, often suffer shipwreck. It is on the entrance upon this scene, where the young man of fashion finds himself so happy in the caresses and applause of all around him, that suspicion is lulled to rest. There it is that the approaches to vice are strewed with flowers of such beauteous appearance, and such balmy fragrance, that youth dances along and laughs at the tongue of Wisdom itself, if it should mark them as the road to destruction. There it is, that,
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by slow and imperceptible degrees, the principles of virtue are first corrupted, and then destroyed in the heart. And, alas! it is into this world, and into such societies as these, that my dear boy is entering, and I cannot be at his side, to point out the lurking snare, and save him from the dangers of it.

My prayers to heaven are continual, that the constant care and culture on my part may not be rendered vain by the poisonous blast of the world. I am proud of the plant which I have reared; it is my boast and my comfort; and should a branch of it fall to the ground, it would grieve me sorely; but if the tree itself, should lose its honours, if its fair and promising blossoms should be nipped in the bud, I am sure it would break my heart.

Before I conclude, let me beg of you not to suspect that I doubt your love of virtue, or your resolutions to persist manfully in the paths of it. Indeed I do not; but it is the interest of so many to corrupt you, and the means of corruption so various and so seducing, that the cold experience of old age cannot always withstand them: I cannot therefore silence my alarms for you. Alas! in such times as these, how will youth be able to escape what age cannot always avoid!

This letter, which is already a very long one, is only preparatory to what I shall here-

hereafter write to you. In the mean time, let me repeat, what I have so often and so tenderly recommended to your consideration, that, whenever you doubt about any purposed action, never to perform it. This rule may be sometimes erroneous; but, in your situation, it will be the safest and best way of proceeding; and will, upon the whole, secure you from numberless inconveniencies.

Notwithstanding your increasing years, and the being enlarged from my controul, I shall continue to please myself with thinking that I preserve some influence over you: indeed, I hope and believe, that I shall have no reason to change such a grateful sentiment, while I am,

Your most affectionate,
Thomas Lancaster.

To Dr. Lancaster.

Honoured Sir,

Carlton Hall.

YOUR kind and parental letter has reached me almost at the very moment of setting off to Mr. Huddleston's, where we are going to pass two or three weeks. I have not time, therefore, at present, to read it as I ought to do; though it would

would be impossible to cast my eyes over it more hastily than I have done, without perceiving that it abounds with the fatherly kindness which has mingled itself in every act of yours to me; for which, and for every thing, I feel myself grateful beyond expression, and shall continue to be so while you can receive my gratitude, and while I can pay the tribute of it. I have snatched a few moments, in the hurry of our departure, to express this short acknowledgement of your goodness; and to assure you, that the first opportunity which is to be found, and I shall anxiously seek for it, you will hear again, and at large, from your most obliged and dutiful

Jonathan Cozens.

To Dr. Lancaster.

Honoured Sir,

Harbury Lodge.

IR I S E before any of the family are stirring, to get an opportunity of writing to you, which, otherwise, I shall not be able to do during our stay here. The infinite attentions which are bestowed on us by our amiable and obliging friends, and the continual schemes which they form for our amusement, leave us only that repose which Nature requires. But in what better manner

ner can I begin any day of my life, than by an act of gratitude to so kind a benefactor as you have been to me? I feel it honourable to myself, and, I trust, it will be acceptable to Heaven.

As I never had the happiness of knowing either of my parents, and as my uncle, who has so kindly adopted me, gave me to your care, I have instinctively considered you in the light of a father, abstracted from that paternal vigilance and affection which I have experienced from you. There has never been a moment since I knew you, wherein I have not felt towards you the gratitude of a dutiful child to a tender parent. My conduct, while I lived with you, has been honoured with your approbation; and, I flatter myself, that every part of my future life will equally deserve it. However, my dear and honoured Sir, it is not so much the business of my present letter to tell you what I will be, as to inform you what I am and have been since I left you.

On my arrival at *Carlton*, my uncle and aunt received me with the greatest regard; and I thought, by their looks at me and at one another, that I was so happy as to be the object of their mutual applause. I have since had that hope confirmed by my aunt, who possesses not the least of that reserve which marks the character of her brother. Indeed, she is so good as to communicate any thing and every thing to me which may give me pleasure. The

The morning after I arrived, my uncle took me with him into his cabinet, and, presenting me with a purse of guineas, he told me neither to waste nor hoard it, but to make that use of it which a wise man ought to do, in procuring innocent pleasures and doing good :—adding also, that I should never hesitate a moment to come to him to replenish it.—I then accompanied him in his cabriolet round the park, improvements, and adjacent farms ; and, as we were returning to his house, he told me that I was master of all I saw and every thing he possessed, while I continued to deserve it.—He has since conducted himself with great ease, good-humour, regard, and attention to me.—He wishes not to be the least restraint upon me, and encourages in me a spirit of communication to him.—My aunt, who is all life, vivacity, and good nature, instructs me, in a manner the most friendly as well as agreeable, how to fall in with the character of my uncle, which, with all its virtues, and many and great they are, has some few peculiarities, which, without her assistance, I should not, probably, have so soon discovered, as I have done, or so properly considered as I ought to do.—My uncle's words are compleatly verified, and I find that I am as full and entire master at Carlton as himself.—Indeed, had I his years, his fortune and his virtues, I could

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give me pleasure

not receive more respect from every one than I do at present.—Perhaps I may deceive myself, but the different individuals of the family seem to throw themselves in my way, with an officious zeal, to be employed by me.—This situation, surely, is much to be envied; but though the novelty, variety, and honour of it, have each their charms, I have never reflected on that I have left behind without a sincere regret, nor will there be any time of my life when I shall not revisit it with the most unfeigned satisfaction.

The family where I now am is very different from that to which I have the happiness of being related; I do not say in real excellence, but in their character and manner of life. At Carlton Hall, every thing is governed by a strict rule of propriety and decorum: its hospitality, which is noble and extensive, is under the influence of laws which give it dignity, extend its utility, and are not to be broken without losing the privileges of it. Besides, though no one loves to see people at their ease more than my uncle, yet so much has he been used to the forms of courts, and courtly society, in the early part of his life, that it is absolutely necessary for his visitors to have a knowledge of the polite world. Persons of fashion will find him and every thing about him perfectly agreeable: but the country gentlemen are not quite of that
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opinion; and it is on that account, as I am told, that our neighbours, though they greatly respect him, do not visit him oftner than strict civility requires.—Now, Mr. Huddleston, who was educated in the same foreign academy with my uncle, knows very well how to accommodate himself to form and ceremony, though in his heart he hates and detests it. The sportsman is the prevailing part of his character, and the whole arrangement of his family partakes of his leading disposition.—Mrs. Huddleston, is a quiet, amiable, genteel woman; and his son an only child, is a young man of about my age, with the best heart and dispositions that can be conceived, but, having had the education of a public school, and being now at the university, he possesses a degree of knowledge and experience that makes me tremble: by his conversation, he appears to be as well acquainted with the world, as if he had lived a long life in the midst of it.—He professes a great friendship for me, which I return with all the civility it deserves; and to prove his confidence in me, he has not failed to give me those histories of a public education which makes me bless Heaven that I have had a private one: and he tells of all his follies and fooleries with that good-humour and pleasantry as to make them appear almost amiable; and which brings forcibly to my recollection your frequent discourses

courses to me concerning the easy communications of vice.

Whether it is from the difference between the general care of venal instructors, and the never-ceasing attention which accompanied the education I received from the wisest and best of men, which gives me a real advantage over him;—or whether he considers that silence, which arises from unskilfulness in the matters communicated to me, as a mark of my wisdom, I cannot tell;—but, be that as it may, he certainly considers me as superior in understanding to himself, which is very fortunate for us both, as it checks him in making me any proposals to partake of those excesses in which he indulges beneath his father's roof, and prevents my suffering the pain of giving him an unpleasant refusal in any thing. He has indeed ventured, more than once, to throw out hints, which were, in a good-natured way, intended to seduce me; but, as they were nothing more than hints, I was not obliged to give them the least attention.—However, as I promised, at all times, to open my heart to you, I cannot but acknowledge that the difficulty of resistance would not have been so easily overcome, if I had been conducted into the way of temptation by a more skilful pilot.—But I hope that this small tryal has awakened my vigilance, and fortified my experience against the more powerful seductions of life.

Having

Having given you this little account of myself, I proceed to assure you that I feel the necessity of your kind councils and advice in all its force.—I am like an infant deserted by its nurse, and left to the strength of its own tender limbs for support. You have thus far guided me by your care, and so enlightened me by your wisdom, that I must entreat you still to put forth your hand to help me on through the many difficult passages which you so often foretold, and I now begin to perceive before me.—What of good there is in me has been derived from your example and instructions;—I am removed, it is true, from the daily picture of the former, but the latter may still be continued to succour and strengthen the plant you have already watered. It is you who have made it bear, as you are pleased to say, some promising blossoms;—do not then forsake it till its fruits have rewarded your labours.

Mrs. Lancaster's illness is a twofold misfortune to me.—As it relates to her and to yourself, I should be, as I am, most sincerely affected; but as it deprives me of the unspeakable advantages I should have received from your personal introduction of me into the world, I hope you will not think me falsely self-interested, if I express an added concern.

I have already been two hours at my writing-table, which, I believe, the length of
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my letter will fully justify; but do not think, my dear Sir, that I mean to apologize for what I have written; I would not treat you so ill as to do it. Perhaps I should not even have come to so early a conclusion, if the time did not approach, when I shall be forced by the preventing kindness of my friends from continuing this pleasing and improving duty.

Amidst all the pleasures, variety, and splendor, which I now enjoy, I must repeat again that the occasions are not few when I look with regret towards the more tranquil, and, after all, I believe, more solid enjoyments of the vicarage.—Adieu, my dear and honoured Sir!—and receive for Mrs. L—— and yourself the unfeigned and respectful regards of your most obliged and dutiful

Jonathan Cozens.

To Dr. Lancaster.

My dear and reverend Sir,

Carlton Hall.

THOUGH I have ever been truly sensible that you deserved all my thanks and acknowledgements for the care you have taken of my nephew's education, I thought it right to wait for some time, till, from my observation of the young man, I might

I might be qualified how to express them: and I must now own, that I find it very difficult to give them force and energy sufficient to convey my sense of your goodness to him and to me.

I was very well assured that no want of care or skill would be imputable to you, if your pupil had not answered my wishes: and I ought, indeed, to have been equally sensible of your kind attentions whether they had succeeded or not; and I flatter myself that I should have been so: nevertheless, the perfect success which has crowned your labours, gives a colour to gratitude, which disappointment would have deprived it of, though it would, by no means, have altered the reality of the sentiment.—Mr. Cosens, my dear friend, is every thing that I could wish him to be.

I may be particular in some of my opinions, and something of a particularity might be visible in the picture I drew of that character I was so anxious this young man should possess;—nevertheless my most sanguine expectations are more than answered.—His demeanour is at once modest and manly; he is neither forward nor bashful; what he believes to be right he does with spirit and decency, and what he knows to be wrong, he avoids with becoming resolution.—after near forty years acquaintance and friendship with you, I should be ashamed to do what I never yet had done, I

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mean to flatter you; but when I say, that, in his manners and conversation, he continually puts me in mind of my friend, I can declare nothing more in his favour.—He is respectful and at ease with me, and, in the lively railleries of witty conversation, his sprightly aunt has not always the advantage of him.

Thus much I thought proper to mention though I have by no means done complete justice to him or to his instructor: but the principle object of this letter yet remains for your consideration. In short, I wish to know your real sentiments of the character of your pupil.—You will be so good as to hide nothing: among his many good qualities, do not fail to inform me of what, as an human being, he must possess, his weaknesses and imperfections.—You must know them all; and the happiness of his life as well as the comfort which may gild the close of mine, will depend, in a great measure, on my entire knowledge of these matters; as that must guide me in forming the plan of his future establishment.

I need say no more to make you perfectly understand me.—Indeed, I wish it were possible for us to see one another, if it were only for a few hours. Would it be convenient for you to come as far as Derby or Nottingham to meet me, and I would contrive to steal from home for a few days to

hold a consultation with you.—If this cannot be, I must beg the favour of you to write me your counsels and sentiments upon a subject which, I assure you, lies very near my heart.—Among other matters, I hope you will inform me that your good lady is recovered from her indisposition; and that, before the fine season is over, you will, both of you, come and pass some time with us.—Mr. Cofens shall consider you as his visitors, which will be greatly flattering to him; and the pleasure of seeing you and Mrs. L——will add to the favours already conferred on your old, sincere, and very much obliged friend and humble servant,

George Cofens.

To Sir George Cofens.

Hislip Parsonage.

My dear and honoured Friend,

I RETURN you an immediate answer to your very kind letter; and am sorry to say that a journey to Nottingham, in order to meet you, is rendered impracticable by the melancholy duty which I must pay at home.—My poor wife's illness has ended in a fit of the apoplexy; and though she is somewhat recovered, a return is much to be expected, when I shall either lose her,

or

or she will remain in a melancholy state of debility during the rest of her life.—I shall not trouble you with my reflections upon a subject in which, I am sure, you will sympathize with me; and as for myself, I must become upon the occasion an example of that patience, the practice of which I have so strongly recommended to others.

With respect to the more material part of your letter, I am well prepared to answer it; and I should have already written to you upon the subject, if my domestic misfortune had not prevented me.—It affords me the most sincere pleasure whenever I reflect upon your nephew's excellence, and that pleasure is now greatly encreased in the communication of my reflections to you.—I hardly know a virtue which he does not in some degrees possess, without being disposed to any vice.—What the world may do for him I cannot tell: there is in it what may attract the lurking seeds of evil, from which the best of men are not entirely free.—I am not afraid of his ever committing with design a bad, a mean, or a dishonourable action. Young as he is, I will venture to pronounce that he ever will be incapable of it. But I must not flatter either you or him. The sensibility which he possesses in a great degree, sometimes even to a weakness, and which I have not been able to correct, may, probably, be the source of frequent inconvenience to him.—

I have used every means that I could devise to check this disposition; but my success has, by no means, equalled that which has attended me in every other part of his education.—Now, my dear Sir, to remedy this weakness; for notwithstanding its amiable appearance, it is a very alarming one; the best way would be to marry him to some young lady whose prudence and discretion may supply the defect in Mr. Cosens' character, or know how to turn it to his honour and advantage.—His sensibilities will find proper and full objects in the care of a family:—they will qualify him to be the affectionate husband, the tender father; and, being thus wisely, naturally, and satisfactorily employed, they will not be readily induced to quit a station so congenial to them by the arts and delusions of the world.

The variety and novelty of his present situation may, perhaps, for a time, hide a disposition to solitude, which has been too much encouraged by him, and a turn for the indulgence of that high-wrought melancholy, which, while it is in general the lot of superior minds, is but ill calculated for the affairs of the world.—He does not want gaiety of spirits, nor that chearful playfulness of thought which adds so much to the pleasure of society; but, as he used to express himself, he seemed to be more conscious of his existence here, and of his claim

claim to a future existence hereafter; when he was engaged in his solitary contemplations.—It was then, he used to add, that he found his love for mankind most unbounded, his gratitude to his benefactors most sincere, and the fervour of his devotion most lively and affecting. I need not tell you, my friend, that such thoughts as these were not to be opposed by direct argument, but by indirect reasoning and observation, which I never failed to employ when an opportunity presented itself.—This is another argument for the plan I have already proposed, which, by giving him a succession of duties to fulfil, will preserve his mind from those solitary habits, which I have sometimes been afraid would end in the melancholy gloom of enthusiasm.

But it may be said, perhaps, that the mingling with the world, and blending in the societies of public life, would give a new turn to his feelings and character.—This I acknowledge might happen; but I rather apprehend that the remedy would be attended with danger.—Without entering into particulars, I cannot but think, if he finds the commerce of the world as others have found it, that he risks the being turned at once from one extreme of disposition, whose objects are good, to the contrary, whose objects may be bad. His sensibility might be changed into moroseness, and his love of mankind into suspicion and

misanthropy.—This being my idea of the matter, I think no method can be conceived which so fully warrants success, as that which I have offered to your consideration.—His affections will then have proper occupations; his mind will ever have a most pleasing engagement; and his sense of duty, operating upon the whole, will settle him in that steady excellence of Character which will make him the happiest and most respected of men.—Much thought and consideration, however, will be necessary in the choice of that happy woman who is to form the felicity and honour of such a man. This, I doubt not, will be a pleasing business to you; and it is, among the many happy circumstances of Mr. Colens' life, by no means the least fortunate, that he has a person of your taste, judgment, experience, and character, to direct this choice in a matter of such great importance.

It may, however, be objected by some, and, perhaps, by yourself, that such an early matrimonial engagement will interfere with that finishing to his education which is to be acquired by foreign travel. I am not unacquainted with foreign countries, and it has fallen to my lot, as you very well know, to be a competent judge of the profits and losses, if I may so express myself, of a tour through them. Believe me, my dear Sir, that the sending Mr. Colens abroad, at present, would be very dangerous;

derous; and, in my opinion, he does not want it. He is well-bred from nature, and elegant from feeling; his instructors in the accomplishments of youth have all been excellent, and he has fully profited by them. Besides, there have been many great and good men, honourable in themselves and respected by every body, who have received no other education but such as their own country afforded them, which is the best in the world. But, without entering into a particular consideration of the utility of foreign travel, I shall only observe, that, with respect to Mr. Cosens, it should be waved at least for the present: I am sure you will think it necessary that he should have mixed with the public society of his own country, before he engages in that of another. After all, if it should be your opinion that a view of other nations is absolutely necessary to complete education, let the first year of his marriage be passed in the usual tours of France and Italy; if circumstances admit, and you approve, they may be continued or enlarged. The amazing improvements in every means of foreign, as well as domestic travel, since our time, render foreign journies no more to be considered as matters of terror and danger to women; but, on the contrary, of convenience and pleasure. Thus he will be secure from all the inconveniencies of a foreign tour, and reap every advantage which can be derived from

it.—He is of that temper and frame of mind which will occasion his first attachment to be his last. It will be prudent, therefore, to fix it yourself, as soon as may be, lest Chance should do it for you, and in a manner contrary to your wishes. There may appear to be something of singularity in these opinions, but they have arisen very naturally from the subject before us; and long before you did me the favour to ask my advice, I intended to have offered and recommended the opinions which have now fallen from my pen.

It would be almost an impertinence to add any-thing to what I have already observed; your superior knowledge of mankind will suggest every-thing that might be said upon the subject. I receive your kind expressions of regard as arising from that partial friendship which has subsisted so many years between us, and I feel a great comfort in having so firm a support to rest upon, at a time, when I am menaced with the loss of such a faithful, affectionate, and endearing companion, as Mrs. Lancaster has been to me.

The attention I have paid to the education of Mr. Cofens has been more than rewarded by the success of it. I undertook the business from a regard for you, and I soon found an additional motive to continue it in my affection for him; and it would crown my closing life to see his lot fixed,
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and him happy in it. If health and other circumstances had combined, I should have been most glad to have accepted your kind invitation; but that cannot be: however, at the distance I am from you, you cannot do me a greater favour than the continuing to let me hear from you, and commanding me in any-thing which can administer to your service or satisfaction.—Sensible of the kind interest you take in her welfare, Mrs. Lancaster desires her most sincere respects; in which she is joined by, your most faithful and obliged, humble servant,

Thomas Lancaster.

To Dr. Lancaster.

Carlton Hall.

My dear and reverend Sir,

HA V I N G had my house full of company for some time past, I had not sufficient leisure to give your favour the attention it deserved. However, at present, after a very mature reflection upon every article of it, one or two of which, I must acknowledge, did not at first satisfy me, I enter very much into your opinions, and am determined to make them the rule of my conduct.

You have long known my determination to make my nephew the heir of every
 B 5 thing

thing I possess; he will, therefore, according to the general views of parents, in disposing of their daughters, be an excellent match: so that the only difficulty I shall have to encounter, will be to find a lady with such qualifications, dispositions, and connections, (for fortune will not be a consideration with me,) as will answer the end proposed in so early enlisting him under the banners of Hymen. To be engaged in match-making, and looking about for that purpose, is an errand in which I never dreamed that I should be employed. Indeed, my sister, who approves much of your scheme, and has been aiding and assisting in making me a convert to it, will have the most to do in the business. Women are, naturally more sagacious in such enquiries than the stronger sex; and I may venture to assert, without being accused of fraternal prejudice, that Miss Cosens has few equals in keenness of understanding and soundness of judgment; and besides, she possesses, by a flow of spirits and good-humour, which are unceasing, all the means of diving to the Bottom, not only of human characters, but of what passes among them.

I think myself very unfortunate in being deprived of the hopes of seeing you during the autumn, as I much wished and expected. Indeed I am doubly so, because I shall not only lose a great satisfaction myself, but
that

that this loss is occasioned by a real distress and misfortune on your part, if any of the untoward events of life can deserve that title in the opinion of so good a man as you are, and ever have been. Matters being thus circumstanced, I am determined to go to Bath in October; and, perhaps, I shall remain there till after Christmas. This is my sister's advice, who seems to have all the requisites for a general officer in these exploits. Besides, we have several old friends and acquaintance resident there, who have sons and daughters in plenty; and who knows, my friend, but we may find something among them, which may be an honour to us, without our going any farther.

Whether from a sudden change of life, the violence of exercise, or any other casual circumstance, I cannot tell; but Mr. Cozens has been attacked by a very violent rash, which continued several days. He is now, I thank God, in the opinion of Doctor Hales, in a fair way of recovery. I have the highest opinion of this gentleman, both as a physician and a man: his skill in his profession is only to be equalled by his desire of exerting it for the benefit of his fellow-creatures. If Mrs. Lancaster's case should be within the reach of physic, I beg you will have it stated and transmitted to him. This can do no harm, and it will be a satisfaction to me.

Mr.

Mr. Cofens has just sent to desire me not to mention his illness to you, and as I had already done it, I did not greatly deceive him in promising an obedience to his wishes. His late disorder has given me a deeper insight into those traces of his character which I had not considered as attached to it, till I was better informed by you.

I hope, my dear Sir, that, in the decay of Mrs. Lancaster's health, you do not find any inroads upon your own: if so, there is much comfort left; and you well know how to be grateful to heaven for the blessings it preserves, as resigned to the loss of those which it is pleased to take away.—I am, with great regard and respect,

Yours, &c.

George Cofens.

To Dr. Lancaster.

Carlton Hall.

IN the name of wonder, my dear Doctor, what sort of a young man is this which you have sent among us! It would have been a much greater proof of your wisdom, if you had kept him with you, and made a curate of him. He gets the better here of every-body and every-thing; even I myself strive in vain to resist him. The artful rogue has got such a power over his

his uncle, that an hint from him is sufficient to turn the old gentleman topsy-turvy. The boy, who had scarce ever seen a park in his life, pretends to have a taste, and thought, forsooth, that a wood adjoining to ours should be inclosed in it; and, would you believe it, my old, doting brother has ordered it to be done. He has it also in contemplation to new furnish six of the best rooms, to receive Mr. Cosens' visitors, for whom, it seems, the good old moveables are not handsome enough, though for twenty years past they have been considered as the best in the county. The church pew is also to be new lined and ornamented; as if the good old cushions, which assisted our forefathers devotions a century ago, were not fit for him. I believe, if the boy was to propose to pull down both the house and the church, that it would be immediately done without the least ceremony.

Indeed, Sir, you owed more and better to our family than to send such a troublesome person into it. His uncle sets aside all sorts of gravity and decorum, when he is with him. I am not able to put him out of humour; and our good chaplain behaves, in his presence, just as he does when the bishop comes here to take his annual dinner. He rises the first in the family, and passes some time in studying books which nobody here understands but himself; then he walks alone in the grove behind the green-house,

house, as if he was going to throw himself into the lake; and then he comes to breakfast with such complacency, good-humour, and chearfulness, that he prevents me from eating mine. Besides destroying the general order of the family; for not a creature in it seems pleased to do any-thing but for him; he has turned the heads of half the village. One of the peasants lost a couple of cows by sickness, and the moment he heard of it, he went and gave the man more than sufficient to replace his loss. Two of our capital farmers, who had been at enmity for some time past, and which my brother, the vicar, and even myself, have not been able to adjust by advice, by threats, or by promises, was on a sudden composed, to the admiration of every body; and whose work should it be, but this meddling pupil of yours. I found him also bribing a poor godchild of mine, who was fishing in the brook, never to put another worm upon his hook as a bait; and this business, which could be nothing to him, cost the extravagant booby I know not how many shillings.

But that which has hurt me most, and, I think, will be attended with the worst consequences, though it might naturally be expected to complete the whole, was his behaviour during his late illness, which was mortifying to the last degree. He was confined to his bed three days; and for two
nights

nights he never closed his eyes to rest, for I sat by his bed-side, and during the whole time he never uttered one discontented expression, nor gave one look of impatience: and when the old fool of an house-keeper told him, as he was taking some broth, that he should not die this time,—he replied, with all the gravity imaginable, that, surrounded as he was with the blessings of this world, it could not be supposed that he should wish to leave it; but that, if it were the will of Heaven to take him away, he should be perfectly resigned to that wisdom which knows what is best for us. The old house-keeper, more a fool than ever, immediately took up her apron to wipe the tears off her face, it was so moving she said and I threw a handkerchief over mine, but I hope you will not suppose it was to cry upon the occasion. Upon my word, Doctor, notwithstanding the regard I have for you, and the high opinion I have formed of your abilities, I must pronounce you to be very ill calculated to instruct youth. You have sent us a monster instead of a man: indeed, he is so out of the ordinary course of things, that I cannot help saying, with our grey-headed butler, “I wish he may be long lived.”

Having thus vented my malice against you, I shall change my subject; and, believe me, we are all most exceedingly concerned at Mrs. Lancaster's illness: but it would be
impertinent

impertinent in any-one to offer comfort to you who know so well where to find it in a good conscience and a virtuous life. You see I can be serious for a moment: indeed, and I hope you will believe it, notwithstanding the importunate gaiety of my spirits, I have a pang in my heart and a tear in my eye for the distresses of my friends; and you may be assured that I feel the one and drop the other, at this moment, which are the best proofs I can give, how much I am your sincere friend

Catharine Cosens.

To Jonathan Cosens, Esq.

Hislip Vicarage.

My dear Sir,

YOU have heard, without doubt, from Sir George, of my poor wife's melancholy relapse;—and there is great reason to fear that I shall soon lose her.—I know what your feelings will be on receiving this intelligence; and I have no consolation to administer to you, but such as I apply myself; which must arise from considering the wisdom and goodness of a kind Providence, in its dispensations to the children of men.—But my design in writing to you, at this time, is to get away, as it were, from

from the melancholy scene around me, and to continue that series of letters to you, which I have already begun, and which, I trust, will in some degree supply the want of a personal opportunity of consulting me.

You cannot be ignorant of your situation in life, what your just expectations are, and what an eminence of riches and importance you will be elevated, when it shall please God to take unto himself that excellent man from whom you will inherit it.

—The next reflection that must occur to you, will be the duties of such a situation, and the necessity of preparing to fulfil them. The principles of religion and virtue, which have been so carefully instilled into your mind, are the best and only superstructure of real excellence and greatness. But the mere possession without the application of them, from whatever cause it may proceed, is a very great and injurious defect in the human character. Indolence is a crime of no small magnitude; and the sins of omission are, on certain occasions, and by certain people, scarcely to be exceeded by those which are committed. Now, my dear friend, having observed in you a strong propensity to that tranquillity of life which cannot be suitable to the rank you will hold and the fortune you will possess, I shall make some short observations upon the matter, which I beg of you to favour with your very serious consideration.

Having

Having lived so long with me, and been a continual witness to the peaceful and calm contentment which, by the blessing of God, reigns beneath my roof, I do not so much wonder at your desire of preserving a similar tenor of life: but, with respect to you, this will not do, and must not be. The retirement, wherein I live, is necessary to my station. I have undertaken to guide a little flock in the way of salvation, and it would be erring from this important duty, should I stray from the valley where it must find a pasture: but you are born to take a part in the general concerns of society. The care of a small village is all that belongs to me, while you will be called to that of your country. For this purpose you must mingle in the large societies of the world; you must prepare yourself for the busy scene of public life. Your uncle will conduct you by degrees into it; and, by never suffering your understanding to be led astray from the guidance and direction of those principles you now possess, you will become a most important character in the eyes of the world, and you will become important in your own.

You cannot, nay, I am sure, you will not think that I can propose any thing which would infringe upon your happiness for a moment; and you will do me the justice to believe, that I act from the purest motives

motives of regard, when I tell you, that the contemplative disposition, which you seem to encourage with so much satisfaction, must be checked by you. I should myself have thrown a greater damp upon it than I did at first, but it seemed to aid the deepness of that virtuous impression which I wished to make upon your mind; and I then hoped to have been myself in a situation to have weaned you, by degrees, from those solitary indulgences to which you are so much inclined. You must possess yourself with a nobler aim than to be satisfied with the idea of doing private good in the hamlets which will one day be yours. You will be answerable both to God and man, for a life of more extensive utility. Let your reflections be upon the means of exalting your character by shining in your station; not as a fixed star that is seldom seen, but as an orb, whose benignant influence is not confined to one place, but is felt by the whole system.

Idle and fanciful speculations, however amusing or innocent in themselves, will be a disgrace to you, as they will cause the mispending of your time, and bring on an habitual singularity, which, however inoffensive, can never be respectable. Your life is but young, and has hitherto been so uniform, that there is little occasion for retrospective reflection; on the contrary, you must reflect upon what you are to do,
and

and leave it to a more advanced age to indulge in reviews of the past, which, I doubt not, will then be your reward. The duties of our station encrease with the elevation of it, and the indulgence of fanciful or indolent habits makes us neglect them. That independence which sets us above the will of others, has many claims upon us; and even to honest and conscientious men, a state of dependence is oftentime less toilsome. In a public character, what think you of the duties of a senator? and what idea have you formed of those of a magistrate? In a private one, the duties of an husband, a father, a master, a landlord, a neighbour, and a friend, will make continual demands upon you. If you live, these duties will be yours, and you should prepare yourself for them, and by an attentive observation of those whom you see fulfilling them in the world.—Let not, therefore, your lonely hours be passed in dreams of fancy, or in the labour of abstract thought, but in reflecting upon the different tasks you will have to perform: thus habituated to the idea of them, you will not be unprepared, when you are called to undertake some or other of them; and you know not how soon such an event may arrive. You will then be in the situation of a man, who, before he travels into a foreign country, has made himself acquainted with the language, laws, and customs of its inhabitants.

I am

I am very sure that these hints will not be passed over by you without consideration; and, I trust, that your great good sense will make you resolve to shape your conduct by them. I am afraid of nothing but your being deceived by the sensibilities of your heart. To quench them would be to undermine your virtue; to obey them implicitly would be to lead it astray: the middle course of moderation and prudence will be to fix and secure it.

I have enclosed three lines to your uncle, to thank him for all his kindness to me; and, particularly, for the last instance of it, which, after all, will, I fear, be unavailing. Do not, I pray you, delay letting me hear from you: at this time, it will be a great satisfaction and comfort to your most affectionate

Thomas Lancaster.

To George Huddleston, Esq.

Carlton Hall.

My dear Friend,

I SHOULD have done myself the pleasure long ago of obeying your obliging commands in embracing the earliest opportunity of writing to you; but, whether from the continual state of jovial enjoyment

joyment which I was engaged in during your stay here, and to which I had not been accustomed ; or from some other accident I cannot tell ; but a few days after your departure I was afflicted with a most violent and obstinate rash, from which I am not quite recovered. A melancholy, event which has just happened in our family, conspires with the languid state of body I am in, to prevent my writing in that kind of spirits which would make a letter or any thing else welcome to you. I allude to the death of Mr. Williams, my uncle's house-steward, who fell by his own hand. He was found dead in his chamber on Monday morning, with the pistol beside him that had been the engine of his destruction. The circumstances, and what we know of the history of this unfortunate man, which is very singular, will not fail, I believe, to check the flow of your jovial spirits, which I have frequently observed to give way to the feelings of humanity. But I shall tell you, when I see you, more of this unhappy business, which will be as soon as I hear you are returned to Oxford, when I shall set out to pay you a visit there. This will be a journey of real pleasure to me, not only in examining what your seat of learning affords, but in giving me an opportunity to shake you by the hand, and to assure you how much I am, yours, &c.

J. Cosens.

To

To Dr. Lancaster.

Carlton Hall

Honoured Sir,

I PRESUME that Dr. Hales, in the letter which he wrote to you relative to Mrs. Lancaster, did not forget to mention to you the unhappy end of poor Mr. Williams. So much has this event affected me, that I am totally disqualified from writing on any other subject. This unfortunate man always appeared to me as being a character very superior to his situation. Nature had written Gentleman in his forehead, though Misfortune might have reduced him to servitude. He was certainly, to use the old gardener's expression, a better man's son than he appeared to be. All the circumstances of his life during his abode here have been collected together; and, while they give a singularity to his character, they afford the curious no inconsiderable opportunity to gratify conjecture. I shall present you with the principal of them.

It is now about nine years ago, when my aunt, reading a morning news-paper in London, was caught with the particularity of an advertisement, wherein the person offering

offering his services proposed himself in such a variety of characters, that she cut it out of the paper, as she is used to do, when she sees any-thing which is curious or singular. On reading it to my uncle, he observed that he wanted an intelligent person in the character of an house-steward; and, if the advertiser could but do half what he had declared, and had the recommendation he boasted, he would willingly take him. Accordingly, my aunt, who was delighted with the idea of seeing this extraordinary person, gave the proper orders to find him out, and the next morning he attended. My uncle says he never was more astonished in his life, than when he found the great difference between the pompous display of the advertisement, and the modest demeanour of the man. He believed, he said, he could do every-thing he had professed, and he only wished to have a trial. He referred to a gentleman for a character, who gave a very satisfactory one; so that he was immediately taken into my uncle's service, and attended him into the country, where he has remained ever since, fulfilling, in every respect, the promise of the newspaper.

The particular duties of his employment he discharged with equal correctness, diligence, and integrity: but he did not stop there; no office in the family was rejected by him, when he was not particularly engaged

gaged in his own. He has been known, it seems, many times to run to the stable to saddle the horses when the groom was not in the way; nor is there a menial servant who has not been continually indebted to him, in the same manner, and for an equal assistance. He was a very good mechanic; and several little machines and contrivances made by him for the service of the house and gardens, entitle him to that character. The canoo upon the great lake was the work of his own hands; and all the streamers and ornaments, belonging to the sloop and other vessels, were the offspring of his taste. But his genius seemed to be more particularly directed to gardening, and the disposition of grounds. Indeed, it now appears, that the credit my uncle's head-gardener has acquired in the country for skill and taste in his profession, proceeded entirely from Mr. Williams. It was he who designed the plantations on the hill to the right of the house, which now begin to have such a fine effect. There was not a weeping willow in all the place, till he planted one with so much propriety by the side of the cascade. In short, he was the great but secret spring of all order and propriety in the family; and every servant in it seems to be going wrong, to use their own words, for want of Mr. Williams,

My uncle had, silently, observed this poor man's conduct with much attention

and esteem; nor was it long before he was convinced, in his own mind, that he was a gentleman, and of no ordinary rank and education. This idea, you will believe, must be very painful to a man of my uncle's character; it really was so; at the same time, he was embarrassed in what manner to conduct himself. To deliver his opinion to the man himself would be, he thought, to break in, entirely, upon the designs of his present situation, which, as there could be no reason to suppose they were bad ones, would at all events have been improper, and perhaps cruel: he, therefore, resolved, by degrees, and without communicating his design to any-one, to try if he could not obtain his confidence. He, accordingly, took an opportunity to tell him how highly satisfied he was with his service, made him a present of fifty pounds, raised his salary very considerably, and assured him that he was his friend. My uncle outstepped himself on the occasion: poor Williams saw it, and received his kindness with tears in his eyes, but left the room without saying a word;—perhaps he was not able to do it. Not long afterwards, he was told that he need not wait any more at table, which he had always done. He seemed much affected at this indulgence, but did not avail himself of it, and took his post as usual behind the chair of his master; who, supposing that he had not been

been understood, mentioned it to him again. He then replied, that he rather felt it an honour than a disgrace to keep his public station; but, added he, even if it was, in any degree, unpleasant to me, I should still, Sir, beg your permission to continue it, as such a change might, perhaps, alter my situation in the idea of the other servants, which would be very disagreeable to me. My uncle told him he might do as he pleased; and, from that time, made no attempt towards unravelling the mystery, but determined to leave it to itself.—My aunt had not been without her conjectures; but she was silent also from the same humane principle as her brother.

The butler says that the sermons he used to read in the servants hall on a Sunday evening were manuscripts, and the finest he ever heard in his life; but in examining his bureau not a trace of any paper-writing could be found. He had carefully destroyed all his letters; one single impression in black wax was found, but it was a cypher and could not be easily made out. His little library consisted of a Thomas a Kempis, a small London Dispensatory, Euclid's Elements, a Treatise on Mensuration, a Volume of Architecture, Sanadon's Horace, two volumes of Tristram Shandy, a small edition of Shakespeare, a Milton's Paradise Lost, Thomson's Seasons, a Treatise on Botany, and Addison's Cato, with

some dictionaries, &c. In a large pocket-book there were also found five hundred and eighty pounds in bank-notes; and in his trunk, there was a very large quantity of linen apparel of all kinds. He was found dead in an arm-chair, the ball having passed through his head, and the pistol fallen on the floor: another ready charged lay beside him upon the table. It is very extraordinary, that not a person in the house heard the report, though the unhappy man did not take any precautions to prevent it; for the house-maid found the door of his chamber, where he committed the fact, wide open, and the deed was done at noon-day.

You may conceive better than I can describe the consternation which this business occasioned. My uncle, aunt, and myself, went to the vicarage, where we remained till the ceremony of the coroner's inquest was over, who brought in the verdict of Lunacy. The body was interred at midnight, in the most obscure corner of the churchyard, and the ground levelled and sodded over it. Mr. Williams had received a letter a very few days before his death, but it was not observed to affect him. Indeed, I fear that the blow he gave did not arise from any sudden, unexpected misfortune, but had long been in his contemplation, as hope deferred began to grow more and more faint, till it threatened an
extinc-

extinction; and the thought of it being thus familiarised to him, he dispatched the fatal business with coolness and intrepidity. It was the last day of the month, when he was used to bring his accounts to be settled by his master: this he had done with his usual accuracy and attention; when he retired to his chamber, and put an end to his life in the manner I have already described to you.

This event has occasioned much disarrangement in the family, not only from the melancholy circumstances attending it, but also as it has deprived every branch of it of a most useful and necessary assistant. My uncle himself is obliged to exert a very unusual degree of activity, as well as attention, to supply the immediate want of the excellent servant he has lost. For my part, I really regarded the man; he was employed about me during the whole time I was at Harbury Lodge. The valet de chambre who was hired for me, not arriving in time, he desired to attend me in that capacity, and nothing could equal the assiduity and respectfulness of his behaviour; and a thousand affecting circumstances, which passed unobserved at the time, now crowd upon me, whenever I think upon the subject. My uncle has already sent to London, to find out the gentleman who gave him the recommendation, that we may be informed what to do with his effects. I

must own that I am very deeply interested in knowing who he was, and what have been the events of his life.

There must be something very singular in this unfortunate person's history, to drive him into such a situation; and there must have been something peculiarly excellent in his heart, as well as understanding, from the integrity and amiableness of his conduct. He is regretted, as he was beloved, by all the family, with an unfeigned sincerity; but by none more than by the master of it.—It grieves me to think how much he must have suffered before he could have brought himself to such an act of desperation: perhaps his sorrows may have been rendered more poignant, by the continual restraint he was under from indulging them; for I do not find that his eyes have ever appeared to have been red with tears—though, I fear, his pillow has often been wet with them.—But he is gone, poor fellow, for ever!—He has, indeed, acted, with respect to his heavenly Master, with more boldness than he ever shewed to his earthly one; and this makes the idea of him more afflicting—though I hope and trust, that the great Judge of all, whose eye looks into motives which the utmost sagacity of human nature cannot penetrate, will find something in the whole of this poor man's life, to make him an object of his mercy. My tears fall upon
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the paper, and I can write no more. Adieu, therefore, my dear and honoured Sir! and believe me, with all possible regard and respect, your most dutiful and sincere.

Jonathan Cosens.

To Jonathan Cosens, Esq.

Christ Church, Oxford.

My dear Cosens,

I Received your obliging letter as I was setting out for this place; and I employ the first half-hour of my arrival here, to assure you how much I am delighted with the prospect of seeing you, and doing you the honours of the university.

I enter into all your concern for the loss of Mr. Williams. My servant tells me it was the opinion of all our people that he had received a gentleman's education. Perhaps he was under the necessity of leaving Ireland; for Thomas says, he is certain he comes from thence, on account of some imprudence or misfortune. I remember hearing my mother say, that, on joking with her waiting-woman, who is also Irish, about Mr. Williams, as she had seen them frequently together, and telling her it would be a good match, "No," said the girl, bursting into tears, "that will never

be my lot; for whoever marries him will ride in her coach." My mother did not chuse to say any thing further to oppress the girl, and, I believe, never thought of it more: nor would it have occurred to me, if your letter had not brought it to my mind. It really is not in the genius of a servant, to go out of the world so much like a gentleman. Adieu!—

Nil mihi rescribas, attamen ipse veni.

Yours most truly,

George Huddleston.

To Dr. Lancaster.

Carlton Hall.

My dear and reverend Friend,

MY nephew has, I doubt not, informed you of the late melancholy event in our family: it had such an effect upon him, that we were all of us very much alarmed; and this, added to the langour which his late disorder left behind it, seemed to render some sort of recreation absolutely necessary. I have therefore, proposed his paying a visit to his friend Mr. Huddleston at Oxford, where he is now gone; and, from the sprightliness of his companion, the great source of amusement
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and observation he will find in the university, together with the novelty of this scene, I flatter myself that his usual spirits and tranquillity will be restored—So fine strung are the nerves of this young man, that I fear we shall have a difficult matter of it to give him the hardiness of character; if I may so express myself, which is necessary to secure him from the dangers of life, as well as many of those singularities which tend to make a man ridiculous in the eyes of the world. However, with the assistance of your good counsels, I shall not despair.

Dr. Hales, I find, has written an answer to your account of Mrs. Lancaster's situation. He is an honest as well as a skilful man, and would not deceive you. The loss of friends is one of those calamities which reconciles us the most of any-thing I know to the leaving this world behind us, and treading the path which so many of those whom we have known and loved have trodden before. Farewell, my dear friend! and believe me at all times, with the most sincere regard,

Your affectionate, &c.

George Cofens.

To Jonathan Cofens, Esq.

My dear Jonathan,

Carlton Hall.

THIS short letter will, probably, meet you on your arrival at Oxford;
C 5 and,

and, as it is the first time you have been absent from me since you have been at Carlton, I think it my duty now, as I shall at all times, to give you such instructions as may appear to me to be necessary for your information; and to anticipate that experience which is not to be gained without great hazard, or the possessing such a friend as I hope to prove myself to you.

Such has been the excellence of your education, that you are better qualified than most young men to make judicious remarks upon every thing you see; and, I believe, that you are well disposed to employ your qualifications with discretion and propriety. I must, therefore, desire, when you are at a distance from me, to send me the fruits of your observations. They will be, perhaps, crude at first; but they will improve every day. Indeed, my great motive in laying this command upon you, is to encourage a continual exercise of your judgment, which will oftentimes be the one thing needful in the future part of your life. You will use your leisure to make your communications to me, though I shall expect to hear from you during your stay at the university; where you will find ample room for gratifying your curiosity, in a place which contains many things most worthy of your attention. You will take your own time, and consider yourself as your own master; but, whenever

ver you return, it will be a welcome event
to your most affectionate uncle,

George Cosens.

To Jonathan Cosens, Esq.

Carlton Hall.

WE L L, my dear nephew, I must suppose you then, by this time, fully engaged in the seats of the learned; and that the sweet melancholy face of yours, with which you left us, is drawn into something of a more sagacious gravity, becoming the place you are in, and the objects around you: but, if my friend George did not turn your gloom into giddiness in four-and-twenty-hours, after you had been with him, I will cast him off from me for ever; he shall no longer be a godson of mine, and I will withdraw my venerable blessing from him.

Of the many black gowns which you see every day, is there not some or other of them that you wish to feel upon your own shoulders? I am sure of it. Do you not already find the importance of being surrounded with the learned lumber of a college; and when you have been busy in examining it, do you not enjoy yourself in being black as a chimney-sweeper with the
scientific

scientific dust that smothers you? If you do not, I shall be ashamed of you! Oh, what libraries mine eyes have seen!—some without a volume, and others full of books which are never read; and what poring, clumsy pedants I have known!—Well, if I must have to do with stupid people, give me the dulness of ignorance, which is quiet at least; for the dulness of learning is the most impertinent thing in the world. It is, indeed, my dear Jonathan; so take care of it. I should be sorry to find myself obliged to scower off any rust you may contract during your present visit: and yet, if this should be the case, there will be nobody to do it but me; for you are the hopes of the family, and we must endeavour to give you to the world as bright as a suit of armour, vamped up for a tragedy. My formal brother, forsooth, thinks the young man, God bless him, ought not to be laughed at; and poor Lancaster is so at enmity with the customs of the world, as to be incapable of doing any-thing, because he cannot leave a sick wife; so that the whole business will devolve upon me; and if I fail in my endeavours to do you good, I know not what will become of you: so adieu! Give my love to saucy George, and remember to write to your uncle; I will forgive your troubling yourself about your most affectionate aunt,

Catharine Cosens,
To

To Sir George Cofens.

Oxford.

Honoured Sir,

I DID not obey your commands of writing to you before, as I thought it would be better for me to be, in some degree, qualified to give you an account of this place. Ten days residence has, I believe, enabled me to do it; and I shall preface my letter with the most grateful acknowledgements, among the many other instances of your paternal regard, for having pursued the plan of education for me which your wisdom suggested.

Whatever may be said in favour of public education, and the most plausible arguments appear to be on that side of the question, I am very sure that the real advantages are against it: and it can only arise from a carelessness in examining the matter, that persons of fortune do not withhold their children from public schools and universities, which are so many seminaries of immorality; or, at least, give their instructors such a degree of power as to guard them from contagion. People of moderate fortune, or whose families are numerous, must avail themselves of the cheapness and
run

run the risque of public education: though, in the middling classes, there may be less danger, as they have not the means of gratifying unruly passions; or, having in view the emoluments of the university, are controuled by the prospect of attaining them, which will be sometimes, though not always, frustrated by an idle, disorderly conduct.

With every means of information which the munificence of past ages, and the liberality of the present, could bestow, and with professors eminently qualified to administer instruction in every branch of knowledge; there is such a freedom and independence among the greater, or at least more elevated part of the students, that it is almost at their own option whether they will profit, or not, of the advantages they possess. But the grief does not always take its rise from hence. It has fallen in my way to see a few young men just arrived from some of the public schools, where they have too well prepared themselves to make a bad use of their enlargement from the restraint of school discipline; so that the grievances I have already mentioned, may, I fear, be sometimes traced backwards to an earlier period than the commencement of collegiate life.

I am very certain, that, midst this too general appearance of idleness and dissipation, which must be a reproach to any place

place of public education, there are many serious, prudent, and indefatigable students, who are an honour to it, and will be an honour themselves; but these are, chiefly, among those who, possessing or expecting to possess a share in the emoluments of their respective foundations, and having little or no other means of support, dare not sin against the discipline marked out for them. I do not deny that there may be many amongst the higher classes, who, from a sense of duty and a desire of knowledge, make a wise use of those great means of improvement which surround them; but, after all, they are not sufficient to redeem the university from the charge of bad policy, in suffering an appearance of indolence and dissipation which reflects the greatest disgrace on this important seminary of learning. The casual passenger, who views the scene of magnificence which this university offers to him, is so struck or so satisfied with what he has seen as to pay little or no immediate attention to the manners of its inhabitants; or to consider any excesses he may behold, but as casual and temporary matters, which are, in fact, the scenes of every day, and, at particular seasons, of almost every hour.

The heads of the colleges are, many of them, men of profound learning. Among the fellows of the different societies there are many also who deserve the same character ;

ter; but there are few among them who have the manners of the world and the ease of polite behaviour: nay, some with all the rust of the college upon them, astonished me with the information, that, upon some occasion or other, they had made the tour of Europe; which, though it might have instructed their minds, had not been able to give the least polish to their external appearance. However, these gentlemen are hospitable to strangers, decent in their manners, and attentive to the welfare of the foundations to which they belong. It is indeed to be wished that they could, with their learning, and other respectable qualities, rise superior to the contracted and clumsy habits of a college life, and give to knowledge and erudition a more amiable appearance.

Among other things, I was curious to be present at some of the public examinations; and though, as a stranger, I was no welcome visitor, I was resolved, for once, to be guilty of intrusion; and I found them trifling beyond all conception. Hence it is that idleness and ignorance find means to attain the honours of learning and industry, without the trouble of previous application, or the apprehensions of being rejected.

There is a gentleman of fortune now resident at this place, where he has been for some time with all his family, merely to
superintend

superintend the education of his three sons: so that, while he gives them the advantages of instruction which Oxford affords, he himself looks to, and enforces their application, at the same time he preserves them from the dangers of bad company and the contagion of bad example. I am very much surpris'd that he is the only person here upon the same important and paternal duty.

My friend George is neither a rake nor a student, but is just enough of both to have the character of neither. However, his good temper, lively spirits, and amiable disposition, have acquired a kind of respect which gave me great pleasure. He has shewn me every mark of regard and attention in his power, and in a manner which he knew would be most agreeable to me. If you should have occasion to write to his father, be so good, Sir, as to mention how much I am obliged to his son. I propose to leave this place the latter end of next week; and, in the course of the following one, I hope to find you and my aunt in perfect health at Carlton.

I am, with the greatest respect,

Your most dutiful nephew.

Jonathan Cosens.

To

*To Miss Cofens.**Oxford—*

I AM really, my dear aunt, much concerned for you as matters must go on very gravely indeed at home, when you are obliged to have recourse to so distant an object as myself to shoot your wit at: however, your letter came, in good time, to encrease the mirth of the company with whom I was engaged; for, after having read it myself, I gave it to George, who immediately proposed the drinking your health in a bumper; and Miss Cofens went round with all the jollity and glee that can be imagined. Many questions were asked concerning your beauty, which we declared to be consummate; your fortune, also, we pronounced to be a swinging one: and the joke, which was well carried on, would have passed off to admiration, had not George, as he says, to get the laugh against his company, seriously thanked them for the honour they had done my aunt and his godmother. But matters took a very different turn, and it was with no little difficulty that we could bear up against the raillery which was levelled at us from all quarters. However, it is an ill wind
that

that blows nobody good; and who should be the gainer in all this business but my dearest aunt? for she is become the toast of half the university; and it will be long, I believe, before the health of George Huddleston's godmother will cease to grace the cups of the Oxford students.—I think I am now even with you; and though generosity is my failing, I advise you to be upon your guard in future; for this Oxford air has given a terrible sharpness to my wits, and, when we meet again, you may find, perhaps, a very redoubtable antagonist in your most dutiful

Jonathan Cosens.

Your godson deserves a threefold blessing; so prepare it for him.

To Dr. Lancaster.

Carlton Hall.

My dear and honoured Sir,

I DID not write to you from Oxford, as I was so continually engaged in viewing and considering the magnificent apparatus of knowledge which it contains, that I laid aside all thought of answering your last kind and admonitory letter, till I returned to the leisure and quiet of home. But,
before

before I proceed, permit me to make one observation; which is, that from what I have seen of this celebrated university, I feel myself more than fortunate to have received my education at your hands, and in the virtuous tranquillity of your retirement.

I perceive, and I am sorry for it, that you join with the serious reasonings of my uncle, and the lively ridicule of my aunt, in treating me as a poor, melancholy, hypochondriac character, who will be of little use to himself or others. If I know myself, you are all mistaken; and I shall make use of a little reasoning to prove your error.

You will do me the favour to remember, that it has been one of your chief objects, in the course of my education, to press upon me the greatest caution on my entrance into the world: all your powers of reasoning have been employed to this purpose, and all your eloquence exerted upon this subject. For this end, in what colours have you not painted the great societies of mankind! how have you chilled my young blood in describing the risks of virtue and the arts of vice! And, with all your counsels strong in my mind, and the first letter you wrote me in my hand, I am now entering upon that very scene which you have described as so full of danger. In this situation, my honoured Sir, am I not justified in employing

employing much of my time in reflection and consideration? Are not my solitary walks the walks of wisdom, suggested by you, when they are employed in strengthening my resolutions, guarding my weaknesses, and examining myself? And, I am sure, you will not call that a melancholy moment, when I am addressing Heaven for its care and protection.

If a feeling for the miseries of my fellow-creatures be a weakness, I am weak indeed; but I think you will not give the sentiment of benevolence such an unfavourable name. But on a supposition that I should be guilty of excess in this particular, it would be an error of all others the most venial; and of which, from what I have read, heard, and even seen, small as my experience has been, there is the least danger of a very long continuance. A little commerce with the world, and having some employment in it, will soon bring the mind to its proper tenor.

—If I rise at an early hour; if I awake when Nature awakes, and find that the contemplation of her rising beauties aids the morning hymn;—if I walk forth to catch the last glow of these charms which may aid my evening sacrifice;—in what or against whom do I offend? I never, I believe, have been guilty of an abrupt departure from those who wished for my society; nor have I ever suffered any disposition to
thought

thought or reflection to interrupt the duties of common civility and good behaviour. The strolling about alone may have the appearance of melancholy, when the mind is engaged on the most pleasing subjects; and, after my hours of study, I frequently walk in the grove near the house to digest my thoughts and retrace what I have read; and something very like this used to be your constant practice every saturday evening, when you were preparing for the offices of the succeeding day. But, after all, if I am cheerful and gay in society, if I never bring my studious dispositions into company with me, I cannot be persuaded but that I employ the rest of my time as I ought. If, however, the fears of my friends should continue, let my uncle give me some employment that will require an attentive assiduity, and I will accept it with pleasure. It was but yesterday that I desired to assist him in poor Mr. Williams department, he replied, with great kindness, that I could employ my time better. Be assured, my dear Sir, that your regard for me awakens in your breast very groundless apprehensions. I am most ready at this moment to enter into any profession, however active it may be, and to pursue it with vigour and resolution.

After the instructions I have received from you, I cannot be without a laudable ambition; nor am I insensible to honourable

ble opinion and public reputation: and I shall not be idle in attaining them, when the road is pointed out to me. But do not imagine, my dear Sir, that I write thus to check your counsels, but to justify myself, and to still your apprehensions. I felt much, perhaps too much, for the unhappy fate of poor Mr. Williams; but I caught a tear in my uncle's eye on the occasion; and if he, so long experienced in the ways of men, and so far advanced in life, could not resist the drops of sorrow, I cannot be blamed for having shed a flood of them.

I hope, Sir, that you will continue to reprove me in whatever may appear to deserve reproof, and your pains shall not be fruitless: I will either justify myself to your satisfaction, as, I trust, I have now done, or amend my error.

I am, with the greatest gratitude,

Your most dutiful,

And affectionate,

Jonathan Cofens.

To Dr. Lancaster.

Carlton Hall.

Honoured Sir,

AS I wrote to you, some time ago, concerning the fatal end of Mr. Williams,

liams, with all the circumstances of it, and our conjectures about it, I now sit down to inform you, that we are perfectly acquainted with the whole history of this unhappy gentleman. A few days after his death, a letter arrived by the post which was addressed to him: my uncle opened it, and found it signed by William Freeman, and dated from Gray's-Inn. It was a sensible, friendly, and urgent remonstrance against a supposed determination of the deceased to put an end to his life. An immediate account therefore was sent to Mr. Freeman of his friend's death, with an inventory of his effects, and a short history of the excellent manner in which he conducted himself during his service. This intelligence was also accompanied with an invitation to Carlton. In about a fortnight an answer was received, a copy of which I enclose to you. There are some very touching parts in the story; and I think you will find them so: but I will keep you no longer from it than to assure you with what regard and respect I am, yours, &c.

Jonathan Cofens.

To Sir George Cofens.

Gray's-Inn.

Sir,

I Received the honour of your letter some days ago, and the melancholy contents of

of it so deeply affected me, that, in spite of my utmost resolution, I have not been able to pay a more early attention to it. My unhappy friend had, for some time past, in his letters, complained with very uncommon energy of his declining hopes; and, more than once, hinted at the design which he has since executed. I wrote to him, again and again, every argument that Reason and Friendship could suggest, to turn his thoughts from such an act of despair; but, alas! in vain: and I now cannot but consider myself, by a fond and foolish compliance with his wishes, as a kind of accessory to his wretched end.

As it will, without doubt, Sir, be a satisfaction to you to know the history of this unfortunate Gentleman; I shall endeavour to give it you as concisely as possible, having been, I believe, a witness to every action of his life, till he entered into your service.

Mr. Williams is a native of Ireland, and the natural son of a gentleman of very considerable fortune in that kingdom; who lived with the mother of his child in every respect as if she had been his wife, and educated him as the declared heir of his estate. It so happened, that my mother was his nurse, and, he naturally taking an affection for his foster-brother, I was, on that account, sent to school with him, and partook of the benefits of his education;

was treated like himself, and never quitted him till he went into Yorkshire. It cannot be of any consequence to relate the history of his boyish days: I shall only observe, that he was deservedly the darling of his parents; and pass on to that period when it was thought proper to send him on his travels.—As he loved me with the affection of a brother, I was appointed to accompany him.

He was about nineteen years of age when he left Ireland, and the period allotted for his return was a short time before he should be of age. We stayed three or four months in England, travelling through the principal parts of it; from thence we proceeded to France, and so on to Italy: and it will be sufficient for me to say, that Mr. Williams conducted himself with the most consummate good sense, and was the admiration of all who saw him. At length we arrived at——, a place from whence he may date all the misfortunes of his life.

A young lady of the first quality and fashion in that city, being to take the veil, our curiosity led us to be present at the ceremony; and my friend was so struck with one of the sisters who assisted on the occasion, that he returned home more pensive and depressed than I had ever seen him. Every endeavour was used on my part to dissipate his concern, but in vain. In short, this discontent of mind increased to such a degree

degree, that I was greatly alarmed for his health. To check his feelings by reasoning upon the matter, would have been a vain attempt; and to have aimed at convincing him that it would be impossible to obtain the object of his wishes, would only have hastened that despair which seemed already to threaten him. I thought it very extraordinary that he should have been so violently struck by an object whom he had seen but once, and in the croud of a public solemnity, where he could have had no opportunity of speaking to her: nor did I know that he had since conversed with her, and that her tongue had compleated the mischief of her eyes. But in this single instance he deceived me; for he had contrived to see the lady at the grate, and, in a packet of sweetmates, which he presented to her, had enclosed a declaration of his passion, and an offer to risque his life in snatching her from confinement, if she would afterwards be united to him.

At this time Mr. Williams was every thing that a woman of understanding and sensibility could wish for in man; nor do I wonder, when I recollect what he was, that she could be so easily persuaded to assent to his proposals. This communication between them had continued for near a month, without my being made privy to it. He sometimes went out alone, as he was used to do; but it was in such an

open manner, that I could not suspect he had such a deep and dangerous design in contemplation. At length, however, he thought proper to inform me of his proceedings; and, as we were taking the air in his coach, he enlarged much and very affectingly on the force of his passion, and acquainted me, at last, with the success it had met with, and the promises he had made. He then, in an altered and very determined tone of voice, declared his resolution of risking every-thing to fulfil his engagements, I was so astonished and alarmed at this declaration, as to be rendered wholly incapable of giving him an answer; and, before I could recover myself. he continued, in a manner the most affecting that can be conceived,—“ We were nourished at the same bosom; our wishes, desires, tempers, and inclinations, have hitherto been the same, and our mutual happiness has been our mutual cares: by these, and by a brother’s love, (added he, throwing his arms round my neck,) I conjure you to aid me in attaining this great object of my heart; without which, in the prime of his days, the life of your friend will be cut short by despair.” — When he was a little recovered from his rage of grief, he informed me of his design; which was to carry off the lady, who was of a noble family, from her convent, by force or stratagem, and to marry her

her the moment she was removed to a place of security.

To point out to him the danger of this undertaking, was to tell him of a shadow ; and to have expressed my honest feelings, would have been to separate from him. At one time I thought of going to the British minister, to have consulted him upon the business : at other times I was resolved to amuse him till I could acquaint his father with the business. I had it in contemplation to give intelligence to the abbess of the convent ; I had also determined to oppose the business, and boldly to stand between my friend and the folly of undertaking such a vain and hazardous enterprize : in short, there was no scheme of opposition to him which I did not, at times, resolve to adopt ; and they all ended in my promising to engage in his design ; to assist him in carrying off his prize, or to share his fate.

Without entering into the particular reasons which determined my conduct, I shall proceed to inform you, that I was now admitted to the grate of the convent, to see and converse with the loveliest woman I ever beheld. To all the schemes which were from time to time proposed by us, she made such insurmountable objections, that I began to believe, and, in my cool moments, to hope that it would be a fruitless attempt. However, a few days after-

wards, I found her waiting at the grate with uncommon impatience: "Have courage," said she, as soon as I approached her "and ere another sun is set we shall be far, from danger. I have won," continued she, "the old man to my interest, who has the care of the chapel, and he has undertaken to facilitate my escape. You must be under the garden wall at half an-hour after midnight, with every-thing necessary for the flight of us all."—She then left me in haste, and I returned to give these glad tidings to my friend. No time was lost in making preparations; and, at the hour appointed, we arrived at our destination, with a couple of servants well armed, and the necessary apparatus for a speedy escape. We had scarce taken our station, when a letter was thrown over the wall, and fell at my feet. I had already broke it open, and was trying, if possible, to read it by the light of the moon, when one of the servants came in haste to inform us, that he had seen two persons, armed, waiting at a small distance. I had scarce time to fold up the paper and put it in my pocket, when the enemy appeared, and, after a few previous questions, which were soon given, and as soon answered, a very spirited combat took place, in which we were victorious and left our opponents, to all appearance, dead upon the spot. The groans of the dying persons, which

which we supposed must soon alarm the convent, determined us to retire. On our return home, Mr. Williams immediately fell senseless upon the floor, which made me apprehend that he had been wounded; but, upon stripping and examining his body, I could not discover the least hurt of any kind: it was the wound of disappointment which had occasioned his fainting, from whence he was with great difficulty restored. When he recovered his senses, a flood of tears forced their way, and he grew so composed, as to be able to converse upon some method of renewing his design. I now recollected the letter, and opening it I read as follows: "Leave this place, and speed instantly to Vienna: I will write to you there under the title of the Count de Saint Marie. Believe me, I am resolved to die or to be yours."—The billet was not in Leonora's hand-writing; but that did not make us doubt for a moment of its being written by her command. Mr. Williams, therefore set out immediately for Vienna, and I remained some days after him, as well to avoid suspicion as to learn the consequences of our rencontre. Nothing however transpired; so that, in a few days, I set out also for Germany, and arrived at Vienna a very short time after my friend; as he had travelled very slowly, both from langour of body and sickness of mind.

The first week passed away with some little satisfaction from the novelty of the place; the second was very unpleasant; and the third intolerable: and Mr. Williams had determined, if he did not receive a letter the following week to return without delay to Italy. However, the long-expected epistle arrived in time to save us that disagreeable journey, and was big with expressions of the most faithful affection, and gave the delightful hopes that we might soon see the lovely writer of it. This afforded us new life, and three succeeding weeks brought the same encouraging assurances.

My friend was now capable of some enjoyment, and we mingled in the pleasures and societies of the place. As we were walking one day upon the ramparts, we observed a young man of a very genteel appearance, and a most pleasing countenance, sleeping beneath a tree, with a written paper in his hand. Whilst we were looking at him, he awoke and rose immediately, with much confusion; which, however, was soon dissipated, when we assured him that the liberty we had taken to watch him, was from no other motive but to prevent any curious person from prying into the contents of the letter which was in his hand. He embraced us both; desired our acquaintance in the most obliging manner, and insisted upon its commencing by our supping with

with him that evening. We accepted his invitation, and found him to be possessed of very uncommon wit and accomplishments. He was the Count de Gromstadt, of a great family in Bohemia, and was travelling by the command of his father. The next day we saw him again, and such an intimacy took place between us, that we were seldom separate; though an event happened which almost occasioned a very fatal interruption to it.

About ten days after our acquaintance with him, I had been at the post, and found a letter from Italy, which I delivered to Mr. Williams, in his presence, who read it with rapture, while the other turned pale as he looked towards it. "I have," said he, sighing, "expected such a letter from Italy for some time past, but have not been so fortunate as to receive it." "This," replied Williams, "came from that quarter, and I wish you had such another." "Does it indeed?" said the Count. "Yes it does, answered the other; there it is, read it, and partake the happiness of your friend. No sooner he had seen the characters, than, lifting up his eyes to heaven, and uttering some horrible expressions on the perfidy of women, he returned the letter; and, with a few broken apologies, left the room. We were much surprized at his conduct; but the

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hopes of soon beholding Leonora turned our thoughts from every other object.

The following morning, the Count came to us while we were at breakfast: his looks were those of a man who had suffered the the severest anxiety; and they told the truth. —After a short apology for the abruptness of his departure the preceding night, he informed us that he was inviolably attached to a lady in a convent at——, and that, in attempting to carry her off, he had been attacked by some of her relations, by whom he was wounded and left senseless: but, recovering from the loss of blood, for his wound were, otherwise, of no consequence, he heard a voice command him to go immediately to Vienna, where he should receive instructions how to renew his design. “Now, Sir,” added he, (addressing himself to Mr. Williams,) “the letter which you received last night was written by the hand of one who has penned as tender declarations of love and constancy to me, as she has done to you; and if her name should be Celestina,” —“Stop your threats,” replied my friend, who now began to recover from the trouble which the Count’s discourse had occasioned; “stop your threats,” said he, “as they are unpleasant for a man of spirit to hear, and often call forth a resentment which bars all proof that they are not deserved:—be at rest; her name is Leonora:—I am
not

not your rival, and the singularity of our fates should confirm our friendship. My affections are riveted with a force equal to yours, and I was prevented like you from possessing, at this moment, the object of them; but my arm was more fortunate, and I cut my opponent's short from ever again interrupting the happiness of lovers."—"Alas, alas," said the Count, embracing him, "I know that voice again; and we have only to curse our unpropitious stars: it was I myself who felt the force of that arm which embraces me; and, had we then known each other, we should have been most happy."

Without describing the scene which this eclairsissement produced, I shall pass some days onward, when a note arrived from the same person who had written all the letters in question. desiring us to fly immediately to the hotel, where she was just arrived. Wings would not have been swift enough to have carried us thither; we arrived breathless, and the moment Mr. Williams entered the chamber to which we had been conducted, he found himself, as he thought in the arms of Leonora. At this moment, the Count, who had followed us, entered the room also, and saw my friend half dead in the arms of Celestina. "This is perfidy," said he, drawing his sword, "which merits instant punishment, and it shall find it." I immediately seized his

his arm, or they would both of them have fallen innocent victims to his mistaken rage. By this time my friend had started back from Celestina, and she from him, and the confusion of us all was beyond description, till Leonora, presenting herself from a cabinet, without the least expectation of meeting us, ran forward to dissipate it. In a short time all was perfect satisfaction, and I had the pleasure of seeing an end to suspense and danger, in the long-wished-for meeting of these ardent lovers.

The evening was passed in relating all the difficulties which had attended the escape of these fair heroines, who were the cause of that jealousy which had disturbed us before their arrival. The letter which had been thrown from the convent was intended for the Count, as were all the succeeding ones; but it may be easily imagined, that, in such a simularity of circumstances, the sentiments they contained were equally suitable to both parties. The two nuns, having been faithful in their appointments, had met in the same place for the same purpose; and though frustrated in their design, they were, most fortunately, neither discovered nor even suspected. A simularity of situation naturally brought on a mutual confidence, and that was soon exerted in contriving some new method of making their escape. Celestina, was certain that her lover was at Vienna; and Leonora did not doubt but that she should find

find hers if she once had her liberty. Celestina being a relation of the lady abbess, and in her confidence, was enabled, thereby, to execute her design without difficulty. Leonora was the companion of her flight, and all their trouble was soon recompensed by finding the mutual objects of it.

The fair runaways wanting rest, we returned home; and, in the morning, as we were waiting to receive a summons from them, Leonora came alone in a carriage; and, desiring us to get into it, she begged Mr. Williams to order the coachman to take us one of his usual airings. This being done, and having arrived at some little distance from the suburbs of the town, she addressed herself to my friend, to the following effect— “I have now given you every proof of affection in my power: and I have left my family, my country, nay, my reputation, for your sake: from the same motives I have risked my life; nor do I mean to harbour a doubt of your fidelity or your honour; every engagement you have made with me, I am certain that you are ready to fulfil. But there yet remains something due to myself; and though I had formed a determination relative to my conduct between the time I should see you again and that of our final union, it has now been more duly deliberated, and the circumstances of it, in some degree, changed from the situation of my friend, the companion of my flight. The Count,” continued she,

she, “returned immediately after you had left us, and made such proposals to Celestina as made me tremble and her desperate: in short, he declared, that he could not openly marry her without his father’s consent, and he was certain that could never be obtained. He, therefore, proposed a secret marriage, or a disdain of public opinion in living with him unrestrained by nuptial ties. She reproached him bitterly, and her reproaches went to his heart. He loves her; but should he marry her publicly without his father’s consent, his ruin is inevitable; and he remains in the cruel suspense of sacrificing his fortune or his love. The Count, I suppose, was fully persuaded, when Celestina had left her convent, that, fond of him as she is, she would at once abandon herself to him:—but neither she nor myself left our engagements with any other view than to an honourable establishment, in which our conduct would prove, to those who might become acquainted with our history, that it was not from a wanton, foolish disposition that we bid adieu to a conventual life, but the love of liberty associated to the hopes of attaining a solid and rational happiness. Be assured, Mr. Williams,” added she, “I do not indulge the least suspicion of you; but I am resolved to act myself as I have advised Celestina—I mean to obtain the consent of your parents before I marry you; nor will I set my foot in the dominions of

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Great Britain till I receive an invitation from them to their house as their intended daughter. You will, therefore, continue your travels, and I will either precede or follow you throughout the course of them, so as never to be at that distance from you which may give you pain, and never to be so continually with you as to give the world reason to determine unfavourably of me with justice. When you shall be called home, I will fix my abode on the coast of France, where I shall be equally impatient with yourself to receive that command from your father which will authorise me to give my hand where I have most irrevocably given my heart. These," said she, "are my fixed determinations, which nothing human can alter; and, if I should see anything like a disposition in you to weaken them—if you should once try your great power over me to turn me from them, you shall see me no more. I have secured a little treasure, which will be sufficient to support a retired life in any part of the world; but I would even return to the convent I have quitted, and all the added rigors of it, rather than hear a second time those proposals which I should consider as attempts to betray me, how dear soever the betrayer might be. I shall admit of no reply: your future conduct alone can answer me. While we stay here you will see us every day; and when you are to leave this place,

you

you will inform me, that I may depart some time before to the next town upon your rout, where we shall meet again. At present we will return to my disconsolate friend whom you will do well to comfort ; and also to influence the Count, who is extremely attached to you, to think of proposing nothing that may wound her honour ; but either to obtain, by some means or other, the consent of his father to an honourable union with Celestina, or, for the present, to abandon her."

When she had concluded, Mr. Williams shed a flood of tears, which were accompanied by hers, and I hope not dishonoured by mine. After a short silence, which was that of admiration, though mixed, I believe, with no small share of disappointment on the part of my friend, a sort of broken conversation took place, which continued till we arrived at the Hotel, where we found the Count and Celestina in a situation that called forth all our pity. We remained there till midnight, contriving different schemes for promoting the happiness of this unfortunate pair : but he declaring his father's consent could never be obtained ; and she affirming, that she would never bear a doubtful name ; it was at length resolved, that she should remain the companion of Leonora, that an epistolary correspondence should be maintained between her and her lover, and they must be contented

tented to wait with patience till a kinder fortune should smile upon them.

In ten days, Leonora, with her companion, left Vienna for Dresden, whither we followed her in about a week; and, notwithstanding the object which which was before us, our departure from that city was greatly embittered by our separation from the Count, whose numerous accomplishments and endearing behaviour had won, even during so short an acquaintance, our sincerest affection. From Dresden we passed on to Hamburg: where we were most agreeably surprised by the arrival of the Count, who, having received an account of his father's death. as he was leaving Vienna, did not hesitate a moment to take our rout till he had joined us at Hamburg, where we saw him united to his Celestina. They remained with us a fortnight, and then left us with mutual regret, and with mutual promises of regard and remembrance. The Count would gladly have prolonged his stay with us, but it was necessary he should return home to take possession of the wealth and honours of his family. We did not remain long after our friends, but continued our journey through Holland and the Austrian Low Countries, till we arrived at Bruges, where it was determined Leonora should remain in an English Convent, to learn what she imagined was to be the future language of her life

life, and to wait the summons to Ireland, which was to make her the happiest of women.

Without entering into a detail of the melting scene of separation between the two lovers, I shall pass at once to our arrival in Ireland. We now draw nigh to that critical period which was to give sun-shine or shade to my friend's future life; and such a situation afflicted me with the most poignant uneasiness. I was well aware from the beginning of some of the bad effects, at least, which have since happened; at the same time, I plainly perceived, that, if I opposed the design of my friend, he would fall a victim to despair. To preserve him was my first object; and I submitted the rest to the will of Heaven—nor does my conscience reproach me.

On our arrival at Dublin, the old gentlemen's joy was beyond description: indeed, nothing could exceed the appearance of his son, nor were his qualifications and talents inferior to his external figure. His mother was, with difficulty recovered from the extacy of embracing her charming boy.

As we now drew nigh the period when Mr. Williams would be of age, we all went to the family-seat, at some distance from Dublin, to celebrate it with great festivity. No expence or cost was spared to give joy to every one present; and the festal design had its due effect, I believe, upon every

every heart but that of my friend and myself. He had doubts which beclouded his happiness, and I had fears which did not suffer me to enjoy a moment's repose. At length, the hurry of rejoicing being over, Mr. Williams made known to his mother his situation and engagement with Leonora, with all the circumstances of it, and his resolutions upon it; and pressed her in the most earnest manner to communicate the whole to his father. She used every argument which her authority and her tenderness could employ, to turn his thoughts from the proposed connection, but to no purpose. She then sent for me, and, after hearing my sentiments upon the business, she determined to make the old gentleman acquainted with it, and to exert all her influence in procuring the happiness of her son, though she had every reason to believe it would be in vain; and she advised me to prepare my friend for an absolute refusal from his father.

This lady possessed a very excellent understanding, and well knew that a speedy determination would be best, whatever it might be: she, therefore, took the first opportunity to inform Mr. Williams of every circumstance relative to his son's passion for Leonora, and the engagement between them. He heard her with frequent changes of countenance, and, when she had told her story, desired immediately to

to see my friend, from whom he heard a repetition of it. He was then dismissed, and I was ordered to attend to give my account of it. He questioned me very much with respect to the lady, her character, qualifications, and family; and, without making one observation, wished me a good night. The next morning early he set out for Dublin, and left a written order that we should remain in the country till he should send for us. After a week of sad suspense, we received a summons to attend him. On our arrival at Dublin, he bid us follow him into his library; and, after many affecting observations on filial duty, paternal regard, and domestic obligation, he continued his discourse to his son in the following manner:—"You cannot be a stranger to the many enemies I have made among my relations, and the continued ill usage I have received from them, on account of my tenderness for you; which, indeed, was so great, as to determine me to make you my heir, in preference to prior claims. Since your absence from me, however, a proposal has been made, by some of my best friends, to unite my family to me without opposing the designs I had in your favour—This was no less than to marry you to the daughter of my nearest relation; a young lady formed to gain the admiration of all who see her, and the love of all who know her; whose hand and heart you would have, thought

thought it a supreme happiness to possess, if you had not been perverted by a most fatal prepossession. I entered most willingly into this arrangement, which seemed to promise so much happiness to us all, and which had flattered me with the hopes that my latter days would glide on in peace: nay, to confirm our domestic honour and felicity, I had resolved to lead your mother to the altar, and to suffer her no longer to bear a dubious name. However, not to do any-thing with a precipitancy which might favour of passion rather than judgment, I have consulted those who could and would advise me best upon the present situation of us both; and I find the unanimous sentiments of my friends to be against indulging you in a marriage with a lady of a foreign country, speaking a foreign language and a different religion and who ventured to break from the solemn engagements of celibacy to follow you. I think all mankind will be with me in my determination not to yield to it, especially as my honour would be wantonly forfeited by such a consent. I am therefore to ask you, whether you will banish a passion which dishonours you, or be an alien from your father's affections for ever." After a violent conflict with himself, Mr. Williams declared, that not his heart alone, but his honour was most deeply concerned in maintaining his engagements—that he had made them
in

in the face of Heaven, and that no power or distress on earth should induce him to recede from them. "Think, young man," said his father, with tears in his eyes, "think what you are about; I will yet give you time to reflect and save yourself from ruin." "Sir," replied my friend, "by what I can judge, this will be the last opportunity I shall ever possess of performing an act of personal duty to you: I will therefore dignify it by the honest sincerity, with which I declare to you, that my life and the future labours of it are yours; but what you ask, it is not in my power to give. Though I should never call Leonora mine, she shall never find me unfaithful." "Then, Sir," answered the old man, with a stern voice, "begone! and see my face no more." Mr. Williams left the room in an agony he could scarcely sustain, and as I was about to follow him, the old gentleman desired me to call upon him in about an hour, when he received me with a calm civility; and after reproaching me, but not in an ungentle manner, for having omitted to inform him of our proceedings in Italy, he said, that, as he had educated us like gentlemen, he should not send us away without some provision: on that account he gave me two bonds of annuity, the one of two hundred pounds a year to his son, and the other of fourscore pounds to me; "and," added he, "as ready money may be

be necessary to you both, there is a draft for five hundred pounds on my banker, and I would advise you to shape your course in some honourable way, but without thinking any further of me: my resolutions are fixed, and I shall know neither of you any more. This event," continued he, "seems to be the work of Heaven to turn my thoughts to my legitimate relations, instead of sacrificing them to an idle, illegitimate passion." I thanked him respectfully for all his favours, and took my leave.

We were now arrived at that crisis which I had apprehended: but this was not all; my poor friend was to undergo another shock in the loss of his mother. She had long been in a very declining state of health and seemed only to want this blow to get rid of all her cares at once in the grave. She concluded her dying address to her son, with telling him that he must have no hopes of the least return of his father's affection, but by a total disavowal of his present resolutions. "I shall not advise you in a matter, my dear boy," said she, "wherein you can be the only judge: Heaven has, perhaps, ordered these things for the best: however, my last counsels are to submit to the divine will, and to preserve your integrity in spite of every trial and temptation. I have nothing more," continued she, "to wish you, but my patience, nor to give you, but my blessing." Then raising

raising herself to embrace him, her strength failed her, and, sinking down upon her pillow, she closed her eyes for ever. She bequeathed whatever she possessed to her son, which might have been very considerable, if she had supposed the possibility of the event which had shortened her days; but as it happened, all her effects did not amount to more than a thousand pounds.

The different letters which Mr. Williams had written to Flanders, previous to this time, were calculated to quiet Leonora's doubts on the delay of his returning to her; but it now became absolutely necessary to inform her of every circumstance that had happened, without reserve; and I undertook the unpleasing task. Accordingly I wrote an exact state of my friend's situation, with an offer on his part to be united to her, and to be retire to any part of the world she might chuse, where he was assured they should find those riches in mutual love and affection which Fortune had denied them.

A considerable time elapsed before an answer arrived from Leonora; who, after expressing the deepest affliction at having been the cause of my friend's ruin, there remained, she said, but one step to be taken on her part, which she had already done; and referred to him to the enclosed letters for an explanation.

To Mr. Williams the Elder.

Bruges—

Sir.

I HAVE received a letter from Mr. Freeman, informing me of the late event which has so much distressed your family and yourself. I fear that I have been the fatal cause of it, and my distress is beyond what I can express; but, light and trifling as my character may appear to you, I can command my inclinations to submit to my duty. Let your fears with respect to me be at an end: I have undergone every fatigue, and run every risque, with a view to make the best of men happy. Far from supposing that I should be an intruder upon any family, I had expected to receive a most honourable welcome into yours, But to dissipate, at once, the domestic troubles which I, alas, have innocently occasioned; I offer myself a willing victim, and am resolved to forego what I have risked my life to obtain, the honour and happiness of being united to your son. Be at ease, then, and let your fears of me rest for ever. Take back your offspring to your affections;—beneath the canopy of heaven

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a more excellent youth does not live.—
It is true, that I have broken one engagement, and a solemn one it was; but, to repair that infidelity, I declare, by all that is dear to me here, and by all my hopes of hereafter, that I will never give my hand but where Heaven has given my heart; and that a union with your son, dear as it would be to me, shall never exist, if you do not command it, if you yourself do not wish to possess a daughter in.

Leonora.

To Leonora.

Dublin.—

Madam,

I DISCARDED Mr. Williams from me for his disobedience to the tenderest and best of fathers; and they who know me will justify my assuming such a title. I had formed a domestic plan, which was to have made me amends for all my past sorrows, and have given comfort to the closing years of my life: the happiness and honour of that unfortunate young man, whom I once called my son, were to be the foundation of it, and he daringly refused to take his share in it, I have, therefore, thrown

thrown him from me; and his offence, Madam, is much encreased by his having deceived so excellent a person as you appear to be.

Though it will never be your lot to call me Father, your generosity of sentiment entitles you to that of Friend; and I give you a right to command my best services. If, by chance, you should not have provided against the present disappointment, you you have only to make known your wants to me, and I shall be most happy to supply them to the utmost, now and at all times. I shall wait your commands, and, in the mean time, am,

with great respect,
your most faithful,
humble servant,

Anthony Williams.

My poor friend's history now draws near to a conclusion. He knew it would be impossible to bend Leonora to his wishes.—he could not enjoy solitude, so he determined to go to England, and see what chance would offer there. We had not been long at London, when, one morning, as we were at breakfast, he read the advertisement which had excited the curiosity of Miss Cosens. In order to amuse him, I proposed our going in search of this extraordinary person who possessed so many qualifications, and was so satisfied

with them, as to venture upon announcing them to the world. After some enquiry, we discovered it to be one of those advertisements which are inserted in the public papers by people who make no better use of their wit and their money than to produce such idle impositions on mankind. The printer told us that several persons had sent to him upon the ridiculous business, and, among the rest, he shewed the note, which was written by your order, where it was particularly set forth, that you resided in the country, and in a very distant country. We went from thence to Kensington Gardens, where my friend was very silent and thoughtful; and, after some time, he communicated his design of presenting himself to you as the advertising person. He observed that the quiet of a country life, the novelty of the scene, the business of his employment, and the impossibility of his being discovered, would be best calculated, if possible, to dissipate his chagrin; and that from thence he could emerge at once without suspicion, if fortune should deign to smile upon him. I, who feared the worst from his growing despondency, did not oppose his design. He, accordingly, presented himself to you, and, the following day, you did me the honour of a visit to enquire his character. How I acted my part, I know not; but it was with great difficulty

difficulty that I could deceive you.—A few days afterwards, he gave every thing of value which he had into my possession, with a power of attorney to receive his annuity; and, having arranged the business of our future correspondence, we embraced with tears and I never saw him more.

You know the rest, Sir, better, than myself. I should add, indeed, that I seldom heard from him but when he enclosed a letter to Leonora, and I seldom wrote to him when I had not some tidings of her. During this period, my life has been but insipid and unpleasant: indeed I was enabled to maintain a genteel appearance by the assistance of my friend's annuity, which, it was necessarily agreed, I should use as I thought proper; being stationed here to be always in readiness to seize any opportunity of doing him service, and to manage his correspondence with Leonora, who has been and is entirely ignorant of his humble situation. I have been, at three different periods, in Ireland; to learn if there was any possibility of a change in old Mr. Williams's dispositions; but I could never obtain any satisfactory information.

In all his letters to me, my unfortunate friend never failed to express his most respectful sentiments of you and your family.—How often has he declared his regret that Fortune had ever raised him to an higher station than that which he possessed! In the

last letter he ever wrote to me, and where his despondency seemed to be greatly increased, he assured me that he should not have lived so long but in gratitude to so excellent a gentleman and so good a master as yourself. This sentiment might still have preserved him, had not Leonora, worn out, perhaps, with disappointment and sorrow, given some hints of a design to retake the veil.

I have written to his father to acquaint him that the annuity of two hundred pounds is finished with the life which it was destined to support. I have about a thousand pounds belonging to the deceased in my hands, with some few valuable effects; which, with what he had in his own possession at the time of his death, is, by his will, bequeathed to Leonora, to whom I propose to pay a visit to weep with her the fate of our much-loved friend; though I shall carefully hide from her the more melancholy part of it. But, previous to that journey, I shall obey your commands in waiting upon you at Carlton Hall; and as I am now left with nothing more than my annuity, and having neither the means to enter into a quiet profession, nor the power to engage in an active one, will it, Sir, be thought impertinent in me to offer myself to fill the employment which Mr. Williams occupied in your family? I shall have a melancholy pleasure in being the successor

successor of my friend, and shall have his example, as well as your worth, to give my services the same industry, zeal, and integrity, which you are pleased to say were so conspicuous in him. — I am, with the greatest respect,

Your most obedient,

And obliged humble servant

William Freeman.

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of my friend, and that I have
example, as well as your words to give
my friends the same industry and
which I have seen in
to contribute to the cause of
the greatest respect.

Your most obedient

And obliged servant

THE END OF THE FIRST VOLUME

